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TO READERS
AND
TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The REGISTER is now published by JOHN COBBETT, No. 1, CLEMENT'S INN, where it will continue to be published 'till a situation more convenient for the Public can be found.—The Newsmen and others, who receive Registers in the Country to sell there, and who may, this week, be disappointed of their usual supply, will please to address any applications they may have to make, to JOHN COBBETT, as above; postage free.—A New Edition of Mr. Cobbett's Year's Residence in America will be ready for sale next Saturday; and a New Edition of his Paper against Gold the Saturday after. This work will have added to it some Papers of a more recent date, and Mr. Peel's Bill will be subjoined in the way of Appendix.—The Links of the Lower House, which has been unavoidably delayed, will be published, on Wednesday the 31 inst, in the form and of the size of the Register, and will be sold at the same Price.—A New Edition of Peep at Peers is now published, in this same convenient form and size.—All Letters and parcels for Mr. Cobbett will, if directed as above, postage paid, be punctually attended to.—The publication of the Register will, in future, begin every Saturday Morning at seven o'clock precisely.

N. B. The next Register will contain the QUEEN'S ANSWER to the "KING'S LETTER TO HIS PEOPLE."

TO
EARL GREY,

LETTER III.

On the recent declaration of his Lordship and others, relative to Parliamentary Reform.

London, 17 January, 1821.

MY LORD,

I, last week, announced my intention of addressing a Letter to her Majesty, shewing the "danger of her Majesty placing reliance on the Whigs;" and instead of doing that, I am not only addressing a letter to your Lordship, but in the course of which it will appear, that I have great hope, that there may be "no danger in her Majesty's placing such reliance." Oh! "shocking inconsistency!" This will be literally fulfilling the candid assertion of MR. BROUGHAM; namely, that, not content with changes keeping pace with the four seasons of the year; not content with even monthly changes, my changes are "from week to week;" and that, in short, I

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and consistent in nothing but *change*. *traitor* for endeavouring to obtain that Reform; Pitt might do this

Before, however, this bustling politician, this philanthropic de- whole House of Commons might, fender of spies and patron of without any inconsistency, pass Grannies' Schools, this statesman during thirty years, acts and eulogiums on the Pitt *sinking-fund*, of St. Omers, this framer of and, at the end of that time, call Protocols, this *thwart* of *Queens*, it a "Humbug," as I had called this quondam Radical and present it seventeen years before. Mr. reviler of Radicals; before he, *PEEL*, might not only be guilty of upon this occasion, give tongue, as the signal to the yelping and as *no inconsistency*, but might de- mangy pack to join in the full cry; serve *cheers from all parts of the* before he do this, let him inquire, *House*, when he brought in a whether, since the publication of my last Register, something to matters of *principle* too) to his have not taken place, to *warrant*, former speeches and votes. Mr. and even to *call for*, this change *WESTERN* was guilty of *no incon-* in my opinions and intentions? *sistency*, when he, one year con- This is a circumstance too trifling, tended, that the misery of the perhaps, to be noticed by a per- people arose from the superabund- son engaged in the sublime and- ance of food; and, the next year, miraculous work of satisfying the that it arose from a surplus popu- cries of hunger by teaching the lation. An immense book might sufferers their A, B, C. But, be filled with proofs, that it is no though this may be unworthy of inconsistency in any *other human* his notice, your *Lordship's example* being to change his opinions of men may do something towards keep- and things, and that it is *great* ing an "inconsistent" man in *inconsistency in me* to praise a countenance. Pitt, to be sure; man, even a man, at one time, and Pitt, that founder of English to censure him at another time, ruin and slavery; Pitt might, a, though he may, at the period of one time, say that, "without a the censure, have taken an *instant* "Reform of Parliament, no ho- *advantage* of my absence to pro- "next man could be minister of mulgate through the newspapers "England;" and, at another time, that *I owed him money*, and to en- might pursue Mr. TOOKS, as a deavour to cause it to be believed,

that *this* was the cause of my flight; made by your Lordship yourself, though he may, from motives the at the late Northumberland most unmanly and malignant, county-meeting, might be cited. have clandestinely conveyed my You there declared, that your private letters (relating to the opinions, on the subject of Re-said money) to the press; though form, had undergone considerable he may have given his counte-change, and that you did not now nance and support to a band of see the thing in the same light, in conspiring wretches, whom he which you saw it at an earlier must despise, but of whose services time of life. No! What, change he stands in need, for purposes, an opinion, and that, too, upon which will, at no distant day, be a matter of principle; and of a fully explained to the world: an constitutional nature! Faith it immense book might be filled is well for your Lordship, that with proofs, that it is laudable in your name begins with a G and all other men to change their not with a C; or, you might be opinions, and their consequent accused of inconsistency, and of conduct, according to the changes being more changeable than even that new information, increased English weather!

capacity for judging, or an addition of knowledge, may dictate; teaze your Lordship (who have and that, in me, this is not only manliness belonging to you) with not laudable, but that it ought to the nonsensical spite of the mean subject me to every species of and dirty Hunks, and let me confess censure and abuse, and that it is to the subject of my Letter, right and moral and religious in which is, the recent declaration a dirty, under-working, malign of your Lordship and others, resultant, rich hunks to hire hacks lative to Parliamentary Reform. for the purpose, to feed and pam- In order to derive as much per them out of his own pocket, and as possible from the manner while his niggardliness would of proceeding in the discussion almost go the length of starving of this vital question, I shall first the mice out of his house: and state, from the reports that lie immense book might be filled before me, the very words of with proofs of this description; these declarations, resting here and, to stamp the whole with the circumstance, that they have high authority, the confession, come forth rather tardily, and not

until it was clearly seen, that no have had to endure from the un-
men, even with the Queen in derlings, the *bouche-trous*, of
their front, would be able to sup- those, with whom we now enter
plant, and *keep out*, the present into an amicable discussion of
ministers, without the Reformers our claims. Were we to bear in
at their back. I do not wish to mind the attacks of Brougham,
harp upon this circumstance; I Mackintosh and Scarlett, not to
do not wish to make a *deal* of it; forget the *plundering* and *mur-*
but, it is right to notice it; for, *dering* views ascribed to us by
after all, I may be wholly disap- Lord John Russell, under his
pointed in the hopes, which I, at own hand, we should cry with
present, would fain entertain. the French, "*guerre aux cha-*

The *declarations*, above allu- "*teaux, paix aux chaumieres!*"
ded to, are found in the reports War to the Lords' mansion,
of speeches, delivered at the peace to the cottage! Were we
county meetings of *Berkshire*, to bear in mind these insolent at-
Bedfordshire, *Northumberland*, tacks, how could we, without
and *Cambridgeshire*. I might blushing at our own self-abase-
add *Hampshire*, if I were dis- ment, reason, or attempt to rea-
posed, as I am not, to pay any son, with Lord Darlington, the
attention to the declarations, in Duke of Devonshire, Lord
this respect, of a *Loan-Maker*. Fitzwilliam, or the Duke of
What such persons say has, in a Bedford? We must suspend
case like this, no weight. Their our anger; our just resentment
words are mere wind. But, must be lulled; we must swallow
what is said, on such a subject, the oblivious draught; or even
and at such a time, by the *Duke* temporary good will can have no
of *Bedford*, by you, by Lord *Hol-* place in our minds. We must
land, and by Lord *Folkestone*, believe, or endeavour to believe;
has weight in it; merits that our assailants have, in the
our attention; calls upon use of their saucy tongues, not
us to consider; and, in this gratified the wishes of their
case, to express our opinions, patrons, or, reconciliation with
and to argue the question with the latter would be too dearly
you; while, during the discus- purchased, even by the avoiding
sion at least, we endeavour to of a conflict that was sure to end
forget the revilings, which we in our own destruction.

I shall now, with this command over myself, quote the words of the several declarations, beginning with those of LORD FOLKESTONE, who, at the Berkshire Meeting, said, that "a change of the Ministry could do no good, without a Reform of the Parliament."

The DUKE OF BEDFORD, at the Bedfordshire Meeting, said, "The Ministers would endeavour to support themselves in power by the Addressers; he knew not how to term them; they called themselves the loyal men [laughter]. They declared themselves to be exclusively loyal. He knew not whether there were any of them in the room; if there were, he would particularly address himself to them [applause]. What did their loyalty consist in? Why, in getting up addresses in 'holes and corners' [laughter].—Those Addresses served to swell the columns of the Court Gazette; and the courtly readers took those specious compositions, as speaking the sense of the country, he dared say [laughter]. Of what description were those secretly loyal Gentlemen? They were very well described by a celebrated Irish barrister as 'men who trade in loyalty, and live upon the taxes' [much laughter]. They never lost their stock in trade; they carried it to a good market. If you asked one of them "Are you a loyal man?" he would indignantly exclaim, "I am a loyal man, devoted to my King and country—how dare you question it?" But if you pursued the inquiry, and said, "Are you loyal for nothing?" The answer would be, "Oh, no! my loyalty is a marketable commodity" [much laughter]. And sure he was, that if such a loyal man could not make more of his professions than the farmers did of their barley, he would give up his loyalty altogether [applause], sigh out "Farewell, a long farewell to all my loyalty" [laughter!]. He could not, he thought, close his address better than by expressing his sentiments on the question of *Parliamentary Reform*. From his first entering into public life, he felt the necessity of a Reform in the Commons House of Parliament, and every year since that opinion had become more firmly rooted in his mind [cheers!].—It was a question

" which had occupied the atten- " subject of Reform, he would
 " tion of many eminent States- " not deny that he had some-
 " man, during the long reign of " little embarrassment in speak-
 " George III. A writer, speak- " ing, because much time would
 " ing of this subject some years " be requisite to explain and de-
 " ago, observed that " Parlia- " velope his ideas upon it correct-
 " mentary Reform was the dying " ly, and some caution would be
 " legacy of Lord Chatham, and " desirable to guard himself in
 " the virgin effort of Mr. Pitt. " the heat of speaking, against
 " He would only say, that the " saying more or less than he
 " legacy of Lord Chatham had " really thought. He had always
 " never been paid, and the virgin " been a friend of " Reform ;"
 " effort of his son was a mere " but he had been thought a
 " abortion, leaving behind it no " lukewarm friend. Perhaps, in
 " traces of fecundity." " some senses, he was a lukewarm
 " LORD HOLLAND, at the same " friend to it, though it was not
 " meeting, said : " he had signed " much his nature to be luke-
 " the Requisition, because he con- " warm about any thing. Any
 " ceived that the country could " Reform he could approve must
 " alone be saved by a bold ex- " have for its object *the extension*
 " pression of the voice of the " of the *liberties* and the improve-
 " people emanating from great " ment of the *happiness* of the
 " public meetings. The pro- " people. *He doubted whether*
 " ceedings against the Queen had " any uniform or general altera-
 " been for a long period the great " tion of the basis of our Repre-
 " bar to the consideration of sub- " sentation would even tend to
 " jects intimately connected with " much less secure either of those
 " the first interests of the country. " objects. Nor had he ever look-
 " In order that those interests " ed, as some did, to Reform, as
 " should be considered, it was " a perfect cure for all political
 " necessary, in the first instance, " maladies, as what by a Greek
 " to put an extinguisher altoge- " word was called a *panacea*, a
 " ther on those odious proceed- " remedy to remove every ail-
 " ings. How was that to be " ment or grievance. On the
 " done ? By the voice of the " other hand, the great increase
 " people. It was for them to " of knowledge and intelligence
 " command it. On the extensive " in England (a benefit the peo-

"ple owed to their own excel-
 "lent genius and natures, and
 "not to Kings or Ministers)
 "made it safe and reasonable
 "that large numbers of them
 "should be admitted to a share
 "in the conduct of their own
 "concerns. Some districts, too,
 "had increased prodigiously in
 "population; opulence and im-
 "portance; and they were, in
 "policy, at least, if not in abso-
 "lute equity and justice, entitled
 "to a larger proportion than they
 "enjoyed of political power.
 "Such reforms he had always
 "thought expedient, and had
 "supported. When, then, he
 "looked to the conduct of the
 "House of Commons, and more
 "than all to the obvious and na-
 "tural impression which that con-
 "duct had made on the public,
 "to the distrust, discontent and
 "suspicion it had produced in the
 "community at large, he felt
 "that what had long been desira-
 "ble, had now become necessary.
 "It was necessary that classes of
 "people and districts imperfectly
 "represented, or not represented
 "at all, should have a larger
 "proportion than they now
 "had in the representation of the
 "country, and without it Par-
 "liament could hardly maintain
 "its authority, and could not at

"all recover the confidence it
 "ought to enjoy and deserve. To
 "such reforms, by voting for the
 "resolutions, he meant to give
 "his support. He was not, he
 "acknowledged, an unqualified
 "friend of reform—he could not
 "say he approved of reform, till
 "he knew what reform it was.
 "There had been schemes sug-
 "gested, honestly suggested he
 "believed; which, if accomplished,
 "would in his judgment defeat
 "the ends they proposed; abridge,
 "not extend the influence of the
 "people—injure, not improve
 "the interests of liberty—but
 "such reforms as he had alluded
 "to, were always expedient and
 "desirable, were now in his
 "conscience, he thought, neces-
 "sary.

The MARQUIS OF TAVISTOCK
 said (same meeting) "It had long
 "been his persuasion that no
 "good could arise from a mere
 "change of men without a tem-
 "perate but effectual Reform of
 "Parliament [applause]. He
 "would not support any set of
 "men who would not adopt the
 "principle of reform on entering
 "into office [shouts of applause.]
 "Who were in office was a mat-
 "ter of perfect indifference to
 "him, but as it affected the
 "peace, the happiness, and free-

"dom of England [*long and con-*
"*tinued applause*]."

EARL GREY (Northumberland
meeting). "Were the Govern-
"ment offered to me to-morrow,
"a circumstance which I consider
"by no means likely to happen,
"I would not accept it unless I
"could do it on terms satisfac-
"tory to my own conscience and
"honour, and without being en-
"abled to effect a complete change
"in the present system of Govern-
"ment [*vehement applause*].—
"This declaration I make without
"fear. There is one subject
"materially connected with such
"a change, I mean the necessity
"of a Reform in Parliament,
"upon which I have been much
"misrepresented. My opinions
"of the most proper mode of
"effecting such a Reform have
"undergone some modification;
"I think that, from fear of evil
"consequences, Reform should
"be effected in a more gradual
"manner than I thought neces-
"sary when life was young, and
"hope more sanguine, and my
"dread of danger less acute.
"To the principles of Reform,
"as detailed in the speech I
"made in 1810, on the State of
"the Nation, I still adhere. A
"change in the system of Go-
"vernment is absolutely necessary

"to preserve the Constitution
"from destruction; and though
"a Reform in Parliament would
"be a most powerful means of
"effecting that change, yet,
"whether that Reform should
"be pressed in the first instance,
"is a consideration which, like
"every other public question,
"must be influenced by consi-
"derations of State expediency,
"lest by a too hasty attempt to
"carry it into execution, the
"probable success of that Re-
"form itself be endangered."

Here are some memorable de-
clarations, my lord, and they are
worthy of our best attention.
Before, however, I proceed to
remark on them, permit me to
observe, that I do by no means
agree in the opinion, that the
Ministers have brought the dis-
tresses on the country; or, that
they could have prevented those
distresses by any of the *retrench-*
ments, or other means, that have,
within these fourteen years, been
pointed out to them by their op-
ponents. If it be contended,
that the parliament fairly repre-
sents the nation, it is the nation,
and not the Ministers, who have
produced the misery; for nothing
have the ministers done without
the full approbation, and by the
authority, of the Parliament

In a word, the Parliament re- they divided that House, which presents the nation, or it does is the "*Guardian of the Public* not: if the former, *the nation* Purse." Well; and what did *itself* has caused the distresses; these Guardians say? Why, if the latter, *the Parliament* has they said, *that there should be* caused them: in either case, the *no retrenchment!* Pray, then, *Ministers* stand acquitted, seeing Mr. Sir James Mackintosh, does that no one can deny, that they this *House represent the nation?* are even "*less than nothing*" Come, come, Sir! There will without the authority of the Par- be time enough hereafter to make liament. No *retrenchment*, that fine, long, soft speeches about your friends have ever pointed cruelty to thieves and about dear out, could have prevented the Soldiers in India writing to their distress. Disbanding the *whole* mammies in Scotland; there will *of the army* would not have done be time enough for these here- it. The *Officers and men* toge- after: answer us plainly now; ther do not cost above *two or three* *does this House represent the* millions a year. The rest goes *nation?* Do you say, yes? in ways that have never been Then the Ministers are not in found fault with. And, what fault; for it is the *nation*, and would even the whole of this not the Ministers, who refused sum effect? The whole amount to retrench. Do you say, *no?* of the retrenchments *talked of* Then the fault is not in the Mi- (and talk, as the Westminster nisters still, but in the *House*; *Don* has taught us, is very dif- and, of course, the *House wants* ferent from *do*) did not amount *reforming.* to *three hundred thousand pounds*, Thus, you see, my lord, out of out of an expenditure of nearly this circle we never can get. *sixty millions!* Then, here again Impute what we will to the comes the question, "*who is in* *Ministers*, the imputation comes, *fault?*" Not the Whigs, Mack- at last; home to *the House*; and, intosh would say, for they *did* the conclusion always is, that call for this retrenchment at any there can be *no change for the* rate. Well; but, why did not *better without a Reform in the* the Whigs cause the retrench- *Parliament.* This being then, ment? Oh! They could not. the fair, the necessary, the un- Their hearts were good; and avoidable conclusion; this being

asserted by the *Radicals*, and upon the supposition that Reform was a right thing in itself, now admitted by the Whigs, there remain to be discussed, the *when* and the *how*, this Reform is to take place; that is to say, the time of making the Reform, and the nature of the Reform itself.

With regard to the former, the old maxim, applied to all useful undertakings, may surely be applied here; that is, "there is no time like the *time present*." If it be the want of Reform which has produced all the evils that we deplore, and all the dangers that we dread; if no good can be done without a Reform, surely there is no time to lose. I will speak bye and bye about the *panacea*, mentioned by Lord Holland; and I was sorry to see the word made use of by a person I respect so much as his lordship after it had been worn thread-bare by Mr. Brougham and his saucy brethren of the Edinburgh Review; of this "*panacea*," I will speak by and by; but, surely, we shall now hear none of the old excuses for procrastination as to this important matter. The pretended friends of Parliamentary Reform, fell, during the war, very harmoniously in with it's avowed enemies; for both said, that, upon the supposition that Reform was a right thing in itself, to set about it during the war would be to imitate a man, that should set about repairing his house during a hurricane. This was a miserable shuffle. The comparison was by no means in point. The business of Reforming the Parliament could not possibly have been injured by the war, as an untiled house would be injured by a hurricane. But, to show the falseness of this pretence, what proof do we want other than the fact, that the *union with Ireland* was affected during the same war? Here was a Kingdom, *stripped of it's two Houses of Parliament*; it's nobles wholly unseated from their hereditary seats; it's Commons dismissed like a disbanded regiment; boroughs suppressed as to their Elective franchise; one hundred members in place of more than three hundred I believe were chosen in the Kingdom; and those hundred brought away to sit in a Parliament in another Kingdom!

What impudent men; what audacious men; men how hardened by impunity, must those have been, who made this change during the war, and during the most perilous part of the war

too, and yet, who pretended at the long and bloody contest had the same time, that to make been commenced and carried on! merely a change in the mode of Now, therefore, when the *hurri-* Electing Members to serve in the *cane* is over; now, what is the English Parliament, would have pretence? Why, that those who been like the pulling down part demand a Reform of the House of a house, and building it up of Commons want to destroy the again during a hurricane! The Lords and the King; whereupon knaves knew better; but they the Reformers are called *Radi-* had power in their hands. They *cals*; Radicals are to be stigma- knew that it was easier by far tised by base Scotch Lawyers as to Reform the Parliament of *phunderers* and *assassins*; a hue England, than to make what they and cry is to be raised against called an Union with Ireland; us; and there are men audacious But, my lord, they thought that enough to seem satisfied with when the war should be over nothing short of chopping us prosperity would return with the down and shooting us in the peace; and that then they could streets; though it is notorious, cite their success in war and the that Mr. Fox, the present Duke prosperity of peace in proof of of Bedford, and many others of the goodness of the system; and the same description, declared that they should be able then to themselves years ago for a "Ra- say to the people: "are we not" dical Reform."

"well; and ought we not to let However, things are now come
"well enough alone?" to a pass that render excuses and subterfuges wholly unavailing.

They were, and I thank God they were, disappointed in their The evils of the system are so expectations, as I, for ten long great and so pressing, that there years told them they would be is no choice between *convulsive* Peace, instead of bringing them *revolution* and *Reform of Par-* prosperity, brought them ruin *liament*. Not only is the remedy and misery; entailed upon the absolutely necessary, but *imme-* Country the curses of the war; *diate application* is also necessa- and, how just is providence; ry. It is now agreed, that brought to every mind a convic- Reform is necessary; that no- tion of the necessity of that good can be done without it; very Reform, to prevent which that to change men is useless

without changing the mode of work of Reform after all! At Election; that no change of Ministry can do any good to the country without a Reform of the Parliament; why, therefore, should there be a day's delay; knowing the remedy, why not apply it? Being sick unto death why not swallow the Medicine? Or, are we first to expire and then have the bolus, the healing balsam, put down our throats. Preposterous as is the idea, how glibly did it roll off the tongues of several of the members of the Six-Acts of Parliament! How sweetly did they talk about *first* putting an end to the distresses, and talking of Reform afterwards! Curing the patient first, and then giving him the physic! Such wisdom never before made it's appearance in this lower world. However, this is not I hope the practice to be recommended by your lordship; for, if it be, I have no scruple to predict that the consequences will be such as every man who has much to loose, will have most grievously to deplore.

It being a settled point, that no good can be done without a Reform, it appears to me an absurdity to propose to do any thing before that Reform be begun. And, what is this great

work of Reform after all! At the end of forty years discussion, what is to prevent a Bill being passed in the space of a month? I am yet to speak of the nature of the contemplated Reform. That which will be done will probably contain a great deal less of detail than the Bill of Major Cartwright contains; but even that Bill with all its numerous provisions, is less complicated; requires less of consideration and of previous arrangement; and is far less troublesome and vexatious in the execution, than any one of the acts relating to the tax upon property, or to the regular or local Militia. Doubtless, during the month, that would be requisite for the preparation, the discussion and the passing of a Reform Bill, other great matters might arise and demand attention; but, we recollect that the Parliament could meet, and could think nothing of sitting two whole months to pass those Six-Acts, by which that Parliament will, I hope, for ever be remembered.

In short, there appears to me not the smallest reason for delay; while the state of the Country cries aloud for dispatch. I beg your lordship to bear in mind,

that it does not require such a feelings in existence towards Bill to be *passed* in order to themselves; nay, that there tranquillise the people; to inspire should be some amongst this them with *hope*, the great com- body, willing to cast from them, forter of the human breast; to that which is, after all, the *only* give them confidence in their thing, that can give real value natural guardians; to make them to titles and wealth; and to forget their manifold sufferings, cast from them too this most or, at least, to endure them with pleasing and grateful of all cheerfulness: to effect these de- things, the love of all who sur- sirable purposes, it does not re- round us, for the sake of re- quire a Reform Bill to be *passed*; taining powers, odious in them- it only requires such a Bill to be selves, so odious as to excite *proposed*, in such a way, and shame even in the possessor, and from such a quarter as shall as to imprint a stain upon charac- make the proposition amount to ter otherwise the most spotless. a fair presumption of a favour- Of all the strange things in the able issue. Of all the people world, this, to me, has long ap- in the world the people of Eng- peared the most strange. There land are the last to merit the ac- are, perhaps, men so nearly cusation of *impatience*. Let resembling monsters as to seek them only see reasonable ground for power, in order to have the for confidence, and they are al- means of oppressing, and of ob- ways ready to confide. No peo- taining and securing the hatred ple so soon forget injuries; and of mankind; but, generally though, God knows they have speaking, this is not the propen- much to forget; yet they would sity of the human mind. In the forget all if they saw but an seeking of riches and of honours, *earnest disposition* to do them there are shades of difference justice. And, I do assure you, in our ultimate objects, corre- my lord, that of all the strange sponding with our natural cha- things that I have witnessed, the racters. But, if we look into the strangest of all is, that a body the matter, we shall find the of nobles, whose ancestors were view of every one, except, per- so much revered, and by *such a* haps, the filthy-souled miser, *people too*, should appear not to who is hardly worthy of being be at all desirous to see the same deemed a man; we shall find

the view terminate with exciting love or admiration, or respect in others. This is what we all seek; and very proper it is that we should seek it. Most amiable it is in itself, and excellent are the effects which it produces. It is the cause of good to him who seeks it, and to all who come within the sphere of his influence. How strange, how perverse, then, is the conduct and pursuit of the borough-holder! The power which he derives from this polluted source, is a constant cause of plague, shame, disgrace and torment to himself; while he well knows that it fills innumerable breasts with resentment against him; till at last seeing himself not only wholly bereft of the love of those by whom it was natural for him to be beloved, but even exposed, in imagination, at least, to the natural effects of their enmity, he surrounds himself with the means of obtaining by force reluctant submission in exchange for willing and cheerful obedience. Placed as one of these borough-holders is; seeing what I see, and thinking as I think, I would fling the accursed luggage scrowl from my hands, as I would shake off a serpent, or an adder. I would take no time to deliberate. My estate and my family should be freed from the poisonous pest. I would possess no power that should not tend to cause me to be beloved; much less would I possess any that *must necessarily cause me to be hated.*

I shall be told, perhaps, that the forefathers of the present borough-owners were borough-owners too, and that, yet, *they* were not detested by the people. But, there is a wide difference in three respects. *First*, corruption, bribery and false-swearing were less openly as well as frequently practised. It is in the nature of maladies, moral as well as physical, to grow worse and worse with time. *Sipping* leads to drinking, and drinking to the beastly vice of *drunkenness*. The child first builds houses with the cards; he next learns to deal them out; this is followed by an "innocent game" for a penny a trick; the love of gain (without labour) at his neighbours' expence now seizes him; he becomes a *gamester*, and, to indulge in his propensity, he will cut his another's throat to get at her jointure. Thus has it been with boroughmunching, till at last, when a Minister is accused of selling a seat, the opposition say,

that they *think not the worse of* forefathers of the present bo-
him for the act, because the prac-rough owners, as well as the do-
tice is, as "notorious as the sun-cile people who so cordially es-
at noon day," while the Speaker-teemed them, knew nothing, of
has the decency to exclaim, that, any of these things. They never
at such sentiments and declara-dreamt, that England would
tions "our forefathers would behold such a man as Pitt;
have startled with horror." and they would have been ready
Therefore, the thing is not what to lay prostrate upon the earth
it formerly was. It is worse; and any one that had dared to pre-
it naturally has, at last, become dict, that England would be
universally odious and detestable covered with barracks; that an
But, *Second*, the people have army of nearly a hundred thou-
acquired of late years more know-sand men would have been kept
ledge as to public matters than up in time of peace; that scenes
they formerly possessed; and, like that of Manchester would
Third, the effects have been very occur; and that the ultimate
different from what they formerly consequences of those scenes
were. Boroughmongering, is, in would be such as we have beheld
its mere nature, always the same; Things are changed, there-
but, a boroughmongering with fore, since the days when
ten millions of annual taxes is a your and my fathers were
very different thing from a bo- young men. Here we have the
roughmongering with from fifty reason for the change in the de-
to seventy millions of annual portment of the people towards
taxes. A wolf is always a wolf; those who are their natural
but a sucking wolf is not; to the friends and protectors as well as
flock, what a full grown wolf is their natural *Magistrates*. The
A boroughmongering, without writing of this last word reminds
even a thought of dungeon-bills me of another great change in
and cash-payment suspension the state of society. The whole
bills and banishment bills, is a race of *small country gentlemen*;
very different thing from a bo- by which I mean gentlemen of
roughmongering, co-existent with moderate estates, has been swept
all these, and with barracks and away by the system of taxing
military colleges into the bar and funding. This description
gain. In short, my lord, the of persons, who formed one great

feature in the English community, were the link which connected the nobles with the commons at large. They were the *active Magistrates*, and they governed by *influence* rather than by *force*. To these have succeeded swarms of Loan-jobbers, Stock-jobbers, Contractors, Commissaries, Pursers and others loaded with the spoils of war and taxation, and by another race of no very different character from the last, from the East and West Indies. These new men, besides their natural want of common feeling with the people, are strangers to them; have no means of governing by influence; are and must be wholly ignorant of those matters, a knowledge of which is so necessary to the situation in which they are placed: hence has come the placing of the Magistracy in the hands of the *Clergy*; in almost every part of the kingdom; and thus every means of exciting love in the breasts of the people, and of ruling them without absolute force, has been gradually diminished.

Things are, therefore, my lord, changed; and, it appears to be impossible to restore to England an *English community*, without returning to the use of a

Parliament chosen by the people. The *time* for thus returning, is the present time. Nations do not die physically; but morally they do die; and, as nothing can be done towards the saving of this nation, without a Reform of the Parliament, that Reform ought, it seems to me, to be *instantly begun*. Your lordship says, that it is a question "whether the Reform should be pressed in the *first instance*." I think it should, and for the reasons that I have just stated; but, I may return to this point when I have offered your lordship some remarks on the other part of the subject; namely the sort of Reform that it is just and expedient to adopt.

Now, my lord, as to this point I am under no apprehension of being accused of perverseness or obstinacy; for, however clearly I may regard our claim to universal suffrage and annual Parliaments as standing upon *Law* as well as *Justice*; how well soever I may be satisfied, that we have a *right* to the full amount of our demand, I will be content to abandon any part of that amount, if it can be shown that the retaining of that part would be only *likely* to produce a danger to the existence of the

present form of Government ; or to produce danger of any kind to the welfare of the Country. But, until this *be shown* ; until some one shall condescend to make even an attempt to show this ; surely it would be unjustifiable in us to abandon any part of a claim, which we contend to be founded, not only in justice, but upon the settled *laws of the land*. Mr. Brougham has accused us ; with a sneer like that of Sir Archy in the play, he has lifted the flesh from his cheeks towards his eye, and taunted us with little remedies and big blunders. The Member for Peterborough has called us contemptible fools ; Mr. Baring has called Mr. Hunt an *impostor* ; and the mildest appellations that have been given us have been those of *designing demagogues*, or *visionary schemers*. These wise men appear to have deemed us unworthy of an *answer*. They, great law givers, were engaged in more sublime pursuits ! They were engaged in the discussing of schemes for relieving the distresses of the Country by making corn dear, and by raising taxes for causing persons to migrate, in order that there might be more corn for those that were left ! They,

profound Statesmen, acknowledging at last, that the great weight of taxes was the principal cause of the distress, and that the Debt was the principal cause of the great weight of the taxes ; having made this discovery, these great Statesmen were engaged in schemes, to make the Bank pay in cash, thereby to augment the interest of the Debt, thereby to add to the weight of the taxes, thereby to relieve the distress !

Bravo ! These are the men that laugh at our *wild schemes*, and that think it beneath them to condescend to talk of giving us an answer. Until, however, we be *answered*, we shall, I hope, not be thought presumptuous, if we retain our opinions and stand to our claims. Nevertheless, I for my part, am ready to listen to the *plan* of any description of Reform ; and I *read* the speech of your lordship and those of the other noble persons above mentioned, with great eagerness to discover what *your plans* were ; to my great disappointment, however, I found no description of a plan in any of these speeches. The Marquis of Tavistock talks of a *temperate but effectual* Reform. Very good, as temperate as you please, so that it be effec-

tual. But still here is no plan ; nor indeed do we call upon you to state any plan in the first instance ; but then, *no fault should be found with ours* in the first instance. No man can claim the right of saying that ours is a bad plan, until he himself be prepared with what he deems better ; unless indeed he deny the necessity of Reform altogether ; which is not the case with those on whose public declarations I am taking the liberty to offer your lordship my remarks.

My Lord Holland said, that he could not call himself a friend of Reform, until *he knew what sort of Reform it was to be*. Right : but then the subject was in good hands ; his lordship was master of his own thoughts and words ; and who more proper than himself to describe to us the sort of Reform which he wished to see take place. The words "*such Reforms*," occur three several times within the space of probably three minutes of his lordship's speech ; but this word *such*, essentially relative in its meaning, finds no relative in his lordship's speech except in a description of the wished for effects of Reform. His lordship (and I am sure with perfect sincerity), expresses his wish to see our liberties restored and our hap-

piness improved. He says that Reform is now absolutely necessary to this end. He says that without Reform Parliament cannot recover the confidence of the nation. He afterwards says that he is a friend to the Reform to which he *has alluded* ; but unhappily it is mere allusion, and not *description*, which latter was precisely what the public was so anxiously looking for. From the expression that he must *first know what Reform it was* ; from this expression we necessarily conclude that his lordship does not adopt the Radical plan. Very well : but then, as I said before, why not give us something in lieu of it ? *Moderate* as you please ; *temperate* as you please ; *gradual*, if you like ; but, let us *hear it* ? Let us have a description of it. We have given in our *proposal* : it is for our opponents, who allow that a *Reform is necessary*, to meet us fairly with theirs ; and not like Sir Archy and his learned friend from the borough of Peterborough, to sneer at our proposal and to revile its authors. This is not the way that differences are to be settled either by individuals or by bodies of men. Such conduct on the part of nations lead directly and inevitably to war ; and to what such conduct must lead when pursued between diffe-

rent orders of a nation, it is as unnecessary as it would be painful for me to describe.

In one part of his speech, however, Lord Holland gave a hint with regard to what he *did not* approve of. He expressed his doubt, "whether any uniform or general alteration of the *basis* of the representation would be attended with good effect." I am ready, my lord, to give up all theory; all abstract principle; even the justice and the law of the case, I am ready to lay aside, and rest solely upon the *expediency*, whenever any one shall undertake to shew the *inexpediency* of our plan. Therefore, the *basis* of the representation is a matter to be discussed whenever a plan different from ours shall be tendered for the consideration of the people. I am ready to go a great way even in furnishing the most cogent of arguments to those who are enemies of that which has been so much and so unjustly eulogised, under the name of *self government*, which means a government elective from the top to the bottom; but I cannot let pass this little touch of indirect criticism on our plan without inquiring a little what this assumed *basis* of representation is. During the debates on Lord John Russell's proposition for transfer-

ing the right of election from Grampound to Leeds, there was said about this *basis* a great deal, of which I would much rather be the reader than have been the speaker. *Basis* means *foundation*, and, as applied to this act of choosing Members of Parliament it means the *reason* for a person's performing this act; the *reason why* he performs it. This was said to be his possessing, or occupying, something called *property*. In other words, *property* was said to be the *basis* of representation.

We ask no more; for labour is property; and that too of a nature superior in point of quality to property of every other description. The law recognizes this principle in every line. Actions at law are founded on it. Copy-rights of books, Charts, Maps, Plans, and Prints are built upon this foundation, and upon no other foundation. How monstrous indeed would it be if the Copy-right of Pope's Works, for instance, had been considered as giving less of qualification than the mere occupancy, or at best, the proprietorship, of a mud hut or a cabbage garden! But, taking it in the other light, giving up right, justice, law, reason, and common sense for a while, and taking our

opponents upon their own ground of *real* property; that is to say property in house and land. Taking them on this ground, let me ask them where they will find me a single inch in this kingdom not held by a tenure founded on labour. Your lordship well knows that there is not an inch of land the tenure of which does not rest on a grant, the condition of which grant was, that *service in arms, or labour by the plough*, was to be rendered to him who made the grant. This is so well known that it requires not to be insisted upon, especially in addressing a person like your lordship. And thus, after all the talk about *property* as the sole giver of proper qualifications, it appears that labour is not only property in itself; but is the *sole foundation* of all that is called *real property*.

However, it is not my business upon this occasion to enter into abstract principles or nice disquisitions. My business is to endeavour to bring the noble persons whom I have quoted above to condescend to tell us what it is that they wish to substitute in place of our plan of reform. But, I cannot refrain from observing, in the way of caution to those who may be disposed towards a Reform of a *very moderate extent*, that

they would obtain nothing by such Reform; that *the people* would be unable to assist them in producing that change of system which your lordship contends to be necessary; that, with nothing but such a trifling Reform the popular voice would have no more weight than it has now, at any election in any part of the kingdom; and that, therefore, such a Reform would, in effect, be no Reform at all. Who is it, my lord, that have saved her Majesty the Queen? Who is it that have made this stir in the kingdom? Who is it that have given us hopes of seeing exertions, calculated to put an end to the scenes of degradation and misery which are now beheld in this once free and flourishing country? Not the freeholders; not the copyholders; not the life-holders; not the lease-holders; not the burgage tenure vermin; not the poor oppressed wretches called *freemen*, such as have recently been drenched with black looking stuff at St. Albans where a *man of colour* had the modesty to offer himself as a Candidate; not the pot-wallopers; no, nor the inhabitant-householders, who, while the *people*, the labouring men, the Artizans, the Mechanics, the *really freemen* of the country, were marching up to her Majesty in

battalians with flying banners; not the inhabitant-householders even of Westminster, who, while the thousands of non-voters were flocking to her Majesty, could tamely sit at home, while their famed representatives marched to Brandenburg House as quietly and as completely unattended as Don Quixote and Sancho marching to the deliverance of the enchanted lady on the skirts of the Sierra Morena! Lord Holland told the meeting that no good was to be effected but by the "*voice of the people*:" it was, he said, for the "*people to command it*." But how is the voice of the *people* to be heard; how are the *people* to command any thing, unless they be

to vote at Elections for Members of Parliament? Surely his lordship means, *by people*, the whole body of the people. Those who pay indirect as well as direct taxes; and surely he does not mean to exclude those who are serving, or are liable every day of their lives to be compelled to serve, their king and country in arms. Surely his lordship does not mean to shut these out from the name of *people*; or, if he do what are they to be called? Of all claims to the right of voting, that which is founded on labour is the best, and of all the sorts of labour justice gives the

preference to *labour in arms*. "Arms and the man I sing," are the first words, as your lordship well knows, of one of the finest efforts of the human mind. And we Radical Reformers say, as the wise State of Connecticut has said in its laws, that he who has served, or is liable to serve his country in arms in defence of that country and it's laws has the best claim to a vote in choosing the rulers of that country and the makers and the guardians of those laws.

Therefore, though I do not here pretend to enter into a discussion of a specific plan, I think it necessary even here to give this caution to the very very moderate Reformers.

I now come to the declarations of your lordship. You declare that you would not accept of power "without being enabled to effect a *complete change in the present system of government*, which change is absolutely necessary to preserve the Constitution from destruction." Now, my lord, this is a very manly declaration; and it is calculated to inspire with hope every lover of the country; because every man, be he who or what he may, has a high opinion of your lordship's honour and integrity. The only drawback from my hope is that

your lordship does not appear to believe that a Reform is necessary even to the *beginning*; while I am not only convinced, with my Lord Tavistock and my Lord Folkestone, that *no good* can be done without a Reform, but am also convinced, that the Reform must be begun; that it must actually be *proposed* at the least, by persons likely to have the power to give effect to the proposition, before any salutary change in the system can be accomplished.

Might I be permitted to ask what your lordship means by "a *complete change in the present system of government*?" That you do not mean a mere change of men at the head of affairs is certain. Neither can you confine your views to such retrenchments of expence as have been proposed by the Opposition. The more or the less of a Dungeon or Banishment Bill can hardly occupy your thoughts for a moment. The shifting of Ambassadors at Foreign Courts is as little worthy of your notice upon an occasion like this. The causes of the ruin, degradation and discontent are great, powerful, and, in their operation, co-extensive with the air we breathe. They strike our sight in a numerous and brilliant standing army; in Military Colleges and Barracks resembling immense Palaces; in a band of tax-gatherers, receiving for their services more than four millions of money in the year; in a Military Staff of enormous expense; in an East India company, having a Debt of it's own, surpassing that of the whole of the United States of America, and by a curious operation drawing the estates from the smaller landholders of England and giving them to adventurers from the East. Without further enumeration, except just adding, that system of Banking and of Funding, the fattened profitters from which have at last had the audacity to propose a *division of the lands*, a silly talk about which by a few half madmen was the pretence for passing laws which doomed me to a Dungeon or to flight; without further enumeration, permit to ask your lordship, whether you intend a complete change as to any or all of these great matters. If you do not, you effect nothing worth the trouble of thinking about; to effect a complete change in any one of them you must first have the cordial support of the *people*; and to have that you must propose a *Reform of the Parliament*.

But, what indeed, is the main feature in this system of government? What is the cause of the

system standing in need of any change at all? Is it not that the Parliament, as *now constituted*, will not agree to such change? This being the case, the first change to be effected, is a change in the Parliament itself. Your lordship allows that a Reform of the Parliament is *materially connected* with a change in the present system of the government; but you must I think, perceive, upon reflection, that the present mode of electing the Members of the Commons House, is the very foundation upon which the system stands. What is the reason that the system has gone on until it has produced all these dreadful calamities? How comes it that so many millions upon millions have been spent in the manner that they have been? How comes it that the resources of the nation are all anticipated; that agriculture itself is pining at the end of four most abundant seasons; how comes it that in the midst of plenty people are starving by thousands? Mr. Bennet, in his letter to the freeholders of Shropshire, says, "I hope you will never forget, that Ministers are the *sole* authors of the distress, which threatens to overwhelm you." Head or heart must be deficient here, and, as being the most charitable course, I ascribe the deficiency to the for-

mer. The Ministers are *not*, nor have they been, the *sole* authors of the distress; nor have they had any hand in producing it, except in their capacity of Members of Parliament. Mr. Bennet ought to know, because every weaver-boy in Lancashire knows, that the taxes, united with the operations of the paper money makers, constitute the cause of the distress. And, if Mr. Bennet wishes to know how this dreadful cause was produced; where it first took life; where it increased in bulk and mischievousness; where it was fostered and cherished, till it swelled out to its present prodigious magnitude, and came forth to crush with its weight all the virtuous industry of the kingdom; if Mr. Bennet wishes to know the birth, increase, rise, progress and final success of this monster in political economy, this destroyer of England, this warning to the world, let him open the *Statute Book*; let him peruse the records of the assembly to which he belongs, and to utter a word *tending* to bring which into *contempt* dooms us to banishment; let him look into the records of that house, and there he will find about a hundred and fifty *acts of Parliament* for making Loans, issuing Exchequer Bills, making Sinking Funds, suspending Cash Payments,

granting Subsidies to Foreign Powers, and many other such purposes, never forgetting the now wonder working Bill of Mr. Peel.

Here we have it, then, in black and white. In these Acts of Parliament we see the cause of all. It is not the Ministers, then, but it is the Parliament, to whom we have to look for an account of all these dreadful and unparralleled calamities; and if Mr. Bennet had said to the free-holders of Shropshire; that the Parliament was the *sole* cause of their distress, he would have been perfectly right. That did not suit Mr. Bennet; for the answer of the free-holders must have been, "change the character of the Parliament, then, and never mind who are the Ministers;" and such answer, would probably, not have been quite so agreeable to Mr. Bennet.

My lord, viewing the matter in this light, I cannot but lament that the word *gradual* should have found its way at all into your lordship's description of a desirable Reform, and I like this word the less on account of it's having been used by the advocates for the disfranchisement of Gram-pound; whose scheme of Reform was such as to make it certain that the nation could not feel any

beneficial effects from it before the end of about *three hundred years!* Three months is too long to wait, when every day of delay produces additional injury. Three quarters of a year may, very likely see all our schemes of Reform swept away, and the schemers along with them, by events, the possibility of the arrival of which, not to say the strong probability, is enough to appal the stoutest heart; but three hundred years! To talk of Reform, the good of which is to be begun to be felt at the end of three hundred years is such an insult to the common sense of the nation, as not to be pardoned upon any other plea than that of perfect thoughtlessness on the part of the noble lord who made the proposition.

However, I have too much respect for your lordship not to be anxious to avoid the imputation of appearing to ascribe to you any thing like this project, which may, with truth, be called *wild and visionary*. I suppose your lordship to mean that, rather than abolish all the sinks of corruption at once, it will be better to abolish a certain number at a time; and, of course, to transfer the elective franchise to populous districts. In the absence of all certainty upon this point I must confine

myself to those objections which strike me as applicable to any plan of gradual Reform. I cannot help thinking that gradual Reform would be very little more wise, than what has been ludicrously called, a gradual return to cash payments; that is to say, terrible discontents during the progress and no cash payments at the end without a total breaking up of the paper money system.

A Reform, supposing it to be accomplished during the session, and supposing it to be *effectual*; the very proposal to make such a Reform would restore the country at once, not to prosperity, but to tranquillity and a state of patient hope. But, a Reform, to feel the good effects of which we must wait for *years*, would only irritate; awaken expectations for the fulfilment of which the nation could not wait with patience. The Reform would be effectual in the beginning or it would not. If it were, then we should need no more of it: the thing would be done: if it were not *effectual*, how is it possible to suppose that a nation, loaded and goaded as this is, could indure torments, which even its rulers acknowledged capable of being put an end to.

Were there no other objection, the appearance of the thing being done grudgingly would be sufficient.

When a point is to be conceded, it is always best to concede cheerfully, and without reservation. He who receives any mark of confidence, accompanied with some little thing which seems to intimate a degree of distrust, never imagines himself confided in. If the Reform were gradual it would always wear the appearance of a grudging concession, a concession to fear, and not to justice; and there can be no doubt that the whole progress of the Reform, even if it were begun and carried on for a time would be marked by suspicion and ill will on both sides.

In the conclusion of your lordship's speech you appear to doubt whether the question of Reform should be pressed in the *first instance*. I think this a vital question. I think it should be pressed in the first instance, the reasons for which I have above taken the liberty to state. If by pressing in the first instance, your lordship means, a *pressing on the part of the people*, that I am quite sure would take place; it being absolutely impossible to believe, that the people would be silent for one single moment after a change of the Ministry. You would be beset from morning till night with pressing applications for Reform, and a tardiness in yielding to the

applications would absolutely drive the people to desperation. Your lordship says that your hope was more sanguine some years ago, and your *dread of danger less acute*. I beseech your lordship then, not to think of office unaccompanied with Reform; for I am persuaded, that, however acute your dread of danger may be, it would, in such case, fall far short of the reality. My Lord Holland acknowledged that the Parliament had lost the confidence of the country, If it have lost the confidence of the country, how is it possible to hope

that the system of government can be amended, or the confidence in Parliament be restored, until a Reform has actually taken place?

A Ministry, coming into power with a proposition for Reform in their mouths would find itself backed by the universal voice of the country, and might, if under the guidance of wisdom, still rescue the country from her perils. I was sorry that Lord Holland made use of the word *panacea*, and added, that he did not regard Reform as a panacea, as was the case with some others. I should be very glad to be informed, *who those others are*. I know of no one that has ever called it a *panacea*. I have never so called it. I have never said that it was an immediate

cure for all ills; or that it could ever restore certain things which corruption have destroyed. The truth is that his lordship takes the accusations against us; takes the false imputations of the dirty hacks, who think they are pleasing their patrons in misrepresenting us; he takes the silly words that Sir Archy Mac Sarcasm and others malignantly ascribe to us, and puts them into our mouths. The fair way is to hear us, and to *answer* us, and not to take as ours that which is ascribed to us by our revilers.

We do not call Parliamentary Reform a panacea; we do not suppose that it would give us finer weather, tenderer beef, fatter poultry, or sweeter bread; we are not so sanguine as to imagine that it would take greediness and servility out of the character of a political Scotch Lawyer; we are not fools enough to hope that it would wash the dirt out of the soul of a stock-jobber, or the baseness from a rich lazy hunk, who wishes to destroy every thing that stands in the way of his thirst after that popularity which he does not merit: we are not so devoid of understanding as to expect effects like these from Reform; but we do expect that it would do a great deal of good and well we may, when two out of

the five Nobleman above quoted, have said that no change of Ministry can do *any good* without it.

I have, I think, clearly shown in the foregoing pages, that the want of a Reform is the *root* of the evil; the main root of all the evils that afflict the country. Therefore, if we have this Reform, that fruitful root of evil is removed. It is pruned away; a new influence comes in to the system, and the evils are not only cured, but their return prevented. All the blunders which we have seen in diplomacy; in Naval and Military affairs; in legislation itself; may, with few accidental exceptions, be traced to this all-poisoning root. As long as the borough-holders possess their present influence, what Minister, however virtuous and wise he may be, can give the country the benefit of his virtues and his wisdom? Carry on the affairs of the government without the assistance of *others* he cannot. And can he, as things now stand, *say who shall or shall not be his colleagues?* Your Lordship, from experience, from dear bought experience, knows that he cannot, that he must take for co-operators those perhaps in whom he has no confidence, and who are calculated only to marr his designs for the public good. A House of Commons chosen freely by the people, would

relieve him from all his embarrassments on this score: he would really be the Minister of the king, and would be supported in every thing that he could shew to be for the good of the kingdom. Supposing (for such a thing is within the compass of *possibility*, even under the present system) all the Members of the Cabinet to be upright and virtuous men. Is it nothing for such men to be compelled to employ under them, in their several offices, as Secretaries, Clerks and the like; to send on foreign mission; on foreign expeditions; to entrust with public money; to intrust with important secrets; and, in short, to fill a vast majority of the offices and places of trust, by persons deriving their pretensions from sources of purity, like those of Barnstable, Grampound, Honiton and the like? Is it nothing for a set of virtuous, able and public spirited men to be compelled to look into these sinks of the vilest corruption to find objects of honours and emoluments? Had not Mr. Pitt these things in his eye, when he declared, that, "without a Reform of the Parliament, no *honest* man could be Minister of England?" If these words were true in those days, what are they now; when the bare expence of collecting the taxes

amounts to more than a quarter part as much as the whole revenue amounted to then?

I have now, my Lord, arrived at the conclusion of what I intended. I think I have shewn that a Reform of the parliament is the *only* remedy for the evils which weigh down the nation. I think I have shewn that the sooner that remedy be distinctly proposed the better. I think I have answered every objection that our opponents have ventured to make to our plan of Radical Reform; and I am sure I have shewn that those opponents have no right to say or to insinuate that our plan is unworthy of attention, until they themselves will be pleased to furnish us with a plan of their own; because the opponents that I am here speaking of acknowledge that a Reform of *some kind* is absolutely necessary to the salvation of the country. As to those other opponents, who call us designing demagogues, the leaders of the deluded; and who say, in the words of Mr. Canning, that we are a low degraded crew, and that they will give us not a hair's breadth, lest we should proceed to the ousting of the Lords and the dethroning of the King; as to these, we have no answer to give, and must simply refer them to *events*.

A few weeks will probably enable us to judge of the degree of reliance, which we ought to place on the party to which your lordship belongs. According to present appearances I am disposed to hope for good; and if I should be deceived, I shall have erred on the right side. There is great power in her Majesty's cause. Her Majesty is a rallying point such as Providence alone could have appointed. The people will never desert her; but even the Queen, if she were to issue an expression of her anxious wish that the people would support a Ministry, that would refuse them Reform; even the Queen, would not succeed in such an undertaking.

And, where is the ground for *fear*? What has any honest man to be afraid of at the prospect of seeing corruption, bribery and false swearing put an end to, and beastly rioting and drunkenness greatly diminished in quantity? These are strange things for good men to be afraid of! The fears of men of the present day are of a singular character. An alarm is rung through the country upon the ground of an asserted increase of immorality and irreligion by the very same persons who are terrified half to death at the danger of a measure which would ex-

tinguish in an hour more fraud, more hypocrisy, more corruption, more base and wilful perjury than, perhaps, the united pulpits of Christendom have been able to extinguish in eighteen hundred years. Verily these men must be non-pareils in hypocrisy; and yet their hypocrisy is surpassed by their profligate audacity. It is that audacity and the cool cruelty which it has suggested that has left a sting in the breast of the nation. That sting is there rankling, and has already produced a sore, which, if not speedily healed, will lead to consequences, calculated to make England, so long an example to nations, a bye-word and a reproach throughout the world.

I am,

Your lordship's most obedt.

And most humble servant,

WM. COBBETT.

TO THE
CATHOLICS OF IRELAND.

Can Piety the discord heal,
Or stanch the death-feud's enmity?
Can Christian Love. can Patriot zeal
Can love of blessed Charity?

Merrion-square,
Dublin, 1st January, 1821.

FELLOW COUNTRYMEN,

After another year of unjust degradation and oppression I again address you. We have lived another year the victims

of causeless injustice.—Our lives wear away and we still continue aliens in our native land. Every thing changes around us. Our servitude alone is unaltered and permanent.

The blood runs cold and the heart withers when we reflect on the wanton prolongation of our sufferings. The iron sinks into our very souls at the helpless and hopeless nature of our lot. To the severest of injuries is added the most cruel of insults, and we are deprived of the miserable consolation of thinking that our enemies deem themselves justified by any necessity or any excuse for continuing our degradation.

No, my Fellow Countrymen, no, there is no excuse for the injustice that is done us. There is no palliation for the iniquitous system under which we suffer. It contradicts the first right of men and christians...the right of worshipping our God according to the dictates of our conscience. Nay, this odious system goes farther, it converts the exercise of that right into a crime, and it inflicts punishment for that which is our first and most sacred duty...to worship our Creator in the sincerity of conscience.

For this crime, and for this crime alone we are punished and degraded...converted into an inferior class in our native land, and doomed to perpetual exclusion. Our enemies cannot accuse us of any other offence...other crime we have committed none...Even the foolish charge of intemperance...a charge, which was only a symptom of that contempt in which our enemies hold us...even the absurd accusation of intemperance is now abandoned, and our degradation continues without necessity, without excuse, without pretence, without palliation.

SOME honest men might have been affectionately enter into a rivalry with heretofore deluded into an hostility towards Protestant lovers of freedom; and contend, as I do contend, that Catholics deserve the palm in the cheering struggle which nations have made, and which thank God, the nations of the earth are now making for Civil Liberty.

To prove that Catholic religion is consistent with civil liberty, I appeal to Catholic Spain, where a Catholic Soldiery joined a Catholic People to restore representative Government; and succeeded in a glorious Revolution, unstained on their part by a tear, or a drop of blood. To prove that the Catholic religion is consistent with Civil Liberty, I appeal to Catholic Portugal, where again a Catholic Soldiery joined a Catholic People to enforce the justice of Universal Suffrage and Representative Government; and where also a bloodless and tearless Revolution has been effectuated, of which all that we know is good, is excellent. I might likewise appeal to Catholic Naples, but that the Ireland of her connection reminds me of my own trampled and heart-broken land, and makes me abandon an example honourable to my religion, because it excites feelings rendered too painfully familiar by the miseries of my native country.

I need not recur to more ancient instances—I need not cite the first Republics of modern Europe. The Catholic Republics of Venice, of Genoa, of Lucca. I need not refer to the Catholic Cantons of Switzerland, which were all Democratic, while the Protestant Cantons were all Aristocratic. Nor need I recall to mind the present struggle for liberty and national independence through the wide spread regions of South America. But when I contemplate ancient and modern days, I can proudly but cordially and

With respect of Religious Liberty, the case of the Catholics is, if possible, still stronger. It was a Catholic state that first proclaimed and established liberty of conscience for all persuasions—the Catholic state of Maryland. It was a Catholic Parliament that alone has granted full free, unrestricted, and equalized emancipation to their Protestant fellow countrymen—the Catholic Diet of Hungary. It was a Catholic King that afforded the last instance of a similar emancipation—the Catholic King of Bavaria. These instances of Catholic liberality cannot be made too familiar to the minds of honest Protestants, whose ambition it ought to be to give reciprocal proofs of liberality and christian charity. I would also remind such Protestants that the odious and execrable Inquisition so long cherished by despotic Monarchs, has been crumbled into dust by the Catholic people of Spain the moment they had the power to crush it.—I would remind them that in France a Catholic Monarch, whose sincerity in the Catholic faith cannot be doubted, and who punctually hears Mass every day, has for one of his ministers of State a Protestant Gentleman, although that Protestant if he were in England could not fill the office of parish constable, without swearing that the Mass was impious, and he who heard it an Idolator. Finally, let every Protestant recollect that even in Rome itself a Protestant church has been erected, and that the Protestant worship

is performed in Rome as it were under we might still expect, to win our way by the eye, and certainly by the permission, declaring our attachment to the genuine of his Holiness the Pope himself. principles of the Constitution. Had not

I will not, and I need not pursue this Catholics given not only the best and subject farther. Every unprejudiced man brightest but almost all the examples of who will consider the subject dispassion-religious liberality hitherto known, we ately must with me arrive at the conclu-might flatter ourselves to succeed by sion, that the tents of the Catholic religion solemn protestations that the real doctrine are perfectly consistent with complete of our Apostolic Church disclaims all freedom of conscience, and that they as-force or compulsion, and seeks for votaries sort kindly and well with the best forms as the Apostles did by mere persuasion. of civil liberty. But—alas—every hope—every expect-

I do not dwell upon these topics be-tation of this kind is now useless. Our cause of the melancholy pleasure I feel degradations—I repeat it—without a re-in contrasting our merits with our suffer-medy—because it is without a rational ings. I do not dwell upon them because cause, or any reasonable pretence.

of the honest pride I experience at the From our own exertions we can expect superiority in religious liberality and love no relief...can we hope for any redress of rational liberty, which belongs to the from Parliament? In my conscience I think religion of my fathers and mine. I ad-not whilst the Parliament remains in its vert to them merely to shew that as Ca-present anomalous state. Indeed I have tholic degradation in Ireland is without a arrived at the most perfect conviction that cause, so it also is without a remedy. it is the extreme of folly and absurdity to Could that degradation be attributed to imagine that an unreformed Parliament intemperance, we might hope for a miti-would or could consent to give us relief.

gation of it by changing our manner, and Upon principle the present Parliament becoming as gentle as sucking doves can not give us relief—for two reasons— Could that degradation be justified by first, because by emancipating the Ca-offence or crime on our part—then in-tholics of Ireland they would destroy the deed we might hope for relief by re-system by which the present ministry pentance, by atonement, by amendment. govern Ireland—the system of dissension Had not ancient and modern instances of and division—the weakening of all by the enthusiastic devotion to liberty of preventing any constitutional combination Catholics proved our fitness for freedom, or rational cohesion for the purposes of

opposing mis-rule. Secondly, because to grant us emancipation would be to extend the sphere of civil liberty, and the Alchymists who expected to extract the most precious metals from the dross of the lowest minerals were sapient beings when compared with the drivellers who could believe that they were to receive the fine gold of liberty from the dregs of the existing administration.

All the argument..all the talent was with us..a few often refuted assertions..a few stale calumnies exploded everywhere else, and a MAJORITY of each house were against us.

This is the first fact to prove that it is hopeless to continue our Petitions to an unreformed Parliament. The next is, that such rejections took place although our advocates in the House of Commons did latterly tender the Ministers the Veto as a valuable consideration for a Relief Bill. Now that tender was made not only without our consent, but amidst our recorded and repeated disapprobation..and such tender cannot, I will add, *shall not* be renewed. Neither Mr. Plunket, nor Mr. Any thing else, shall again offer a Veto without a prompt and unequivocal disavowal; a disavowal which will be followed by a Catholic Petition against re-

Let us however quit all theoretic views and come to a closer examination of our

prospects. If we do so..the first object that presents itself to us is the causeless rejection..so often repeated..of our perceiving Emancipation upon any such terms. On this point I will not, I cannot, enter into any compromise. Being a Catholic in the most perfect sincerity of belief, I do, in my conscience, and in the presence of my God, believe, that any species of Vetoistical interference would be equally injurious to my religion, as destructive of civil liberty in Ireland. With this conviction on my mind, all my most strenuous exertions shall be used to disavow, to complain of, I may say, to denounce every person who may seek to obtain for us civil privileges, by a sacrifice of the safety of our religion. But, my Fellow-countrymen, if the Parliament rejected our Petitions, even whilst our advocates offered to extend Ministerial influence and courtly patronage over another church, what prospect or possibility is there, that a Parliament, composed of the same unconstitutional materials will grant us redress, when we disdain and utterly reject that influence and that patronage? —Certainly none.

The third fact to prove that an unreformed Parliament will not grant us relief, is to be found in the history of the last Session. A period had arrived

most auspicious to our interests. The Ministers had resolved to commit themselves with the British People, by the prosecution of her Majesty the Queen. They could not be but conscious of the perfect injustice of that proceeding—they could not but know the odium which must be excited amongst such a people as the English, at the palpable iniquity of any men, combining the inconsistent characters of prosecutors and judges. It required but little intellect to perceive how revolting to common sense, to common reason, to common honesty, such a combination must be. A man has only to place himself in the situation of being prosecuted, with a certainty that his prosecutors shall also be his Judges. Can any thing be more frightful? The ministers knew it well—they also felt what little reliance was to be placed on the discarded servants, the prostitutes, and all the vulgar rabble of Italian witnesses, which the Milan inquisition had raked together. The Ministers knew their danger, and yet with a desperate tenacity of place persevered.

At such a moment as this the Catholics resolved to renew their petition. It was a golden, although not a glorious opportunity. I acknowledge that their conduct was not generous—but it was

very natural. They did accordingly prepare petitions, and Lord Donoughmore, as a matter of course—and Mr. Plunkett, by a strange combination of accidents, were requested to present these petitions.

It is true these petitions were not rejected, but they were worse—they were not received. The house of Lords was not in a temper to hear us. That noble assembly which could listen for weeks with a gloating satisfaction to the obscene details of a Demont or a Majocchi, had not one leisure hour to throw away on the claims and rights of five millions of Catholics. Lord Donoughmore—and his sincerity to the Catholics cannot be doubted—therefore declined presenting our petition to the Lords. Thus in that house has the best opportunity I have ever known of pressing Emancipation on the ministry been thrown away and lost for ever.

The House of Commons was ready enough to adjourn from week to week at the convenience of the ministry; but they could not it seems spare any one of their idle days to hear the prayers of an injured people. Mr. Plunkett accordingly refused to present our petition at that period to the House of Commons, and thus again was lost the most favourable opportunity for

our claims which has appeared in modern times.

Thus have the last session past away; and it only remains for us to consider what course is now to be taken. I have heard it said that our last petition not having been presented still remains, and should be brought before Parliament in the next Session; that I totally deny. Of the numerous persons who signed that petition some must be dead. Is it the petition of the dead men? Many have left Ireland—Is it the petition of the absent and uninterested? Very many have changed their minds on the subject, and would not now concur in that petition. I am one of the number. Is it now my petition or the petition of those who think with me? We totally disclaim it. Besides, our resolution, when that petition was prepared, was, that it should be *forthwith...or immediately...* presented; I forget which was the word. It was prepared for a particular occasion; that occasion has gone by; and with the petition of last session has passed for ever.

At the time we prepared that petition there were six of the Cabinet ministers in our favour against seven. The resignation of Mr. Canning has reduced the number on our side to five;

and if his substitute, as is likely, be from the No-popery faction, then the numbers of the Cabinet will be eight to five against giving us any relief upon any terms.

The advice which I do therefore submit to you, my Countrymen, with respectful deference, is this.. to petition an unreformed Parliament no more for those rights which it has refused so often and so causelessly..and which it will not, it cannot, I may say, dare not grant. The time is arrived when we should be weary of being amongst those

Who yearly kneel before their master's doors,
And hawk their wrongs as beggars do their sores.

It is useless, it is worse than useless to petition a Parliament of virtual Representatives for liberty; we should only be again rejected and mocked by the trickery of a debate—and insulted by an unreasoning majority.

But shall I be asked if I advise you to lie down beneath your grievances in sullen silence and despair. No, my countrymen—no, we will not;—we ought not despair.—There is a restless spirit of liberty abroad, which, if it will submit to just, necessary, and temperate regulation, must lead to good—Let

us not disturb its course or retard its progress.

If we continue our Catholic Petitions, we shall continue the dissensions and divisions of our country—we shall perpetuate those distractions which alone have weakened Ireland and laid her prostrate. By continuing our separate and exclusive labours, we do the work of our worst enemies, and keep up a perpetual line of distinction—a constant wall of separation between sects and parties in Ireland. Let us rather endeavour to amalgamate the Catholic, the Protestant, the Presbyterian, the Dissenter, the Methodist, the Quaker, into the IRISHMAN—and forgetting our own individual wrongs, let us call upon

Irishmen of every description to combine in a noble struggle for the natural and inherent rights of our now wretched country.

Let that struggle be confined within the most peaceable and constitutional limits. Let it have for its object the restoration of the Constitution—and for its sole guide the principles of the Constitution; let us, in a word, join heart and hand in the pursuit of constitutional reform.

Believe me, my countrymen—they calumniate the reformers who tell you that the reformers are enemies of the

monarch or of the throne. The direct contrary is the fact. The reformers are the best guards of the monarchy. They know that a hereditary monarchy gives a principle of fixity to executive power, which affords the best and most secure protection against those convulsions which endanger life and confound property. The reformers are therefore, on principle, the firm supporters of the throne, and one of their greatest and dearest objects is to rescue the Crown from the thralldom in which it is now held by that boroughmongering faction, which, by domineering over both Houses of Parliament, holds the Ministry in vassalage and the King in chains.

Let our future purpose be the abolition of that faction which has plunged these countries in war—in debt—in distress—and involved Ireland in all the miseries of the Union. Let us not enter into any quarrels as to the particular mode of reform;—but let us be always governed by that principle of the Constitution which justifies taxation upon the grounds of consent; every man being supposed to consent to a tax by his representative. So that

without a solecism in constitutional law no man should be taxed who is not represented. This principle is plai

and simple—it accords with justice and love of its country and its kind, and common sense, and will never be forgotten by men who deserve to be free. Ireland—old Ireland.

Such, my fellow countrymen, is the advice of one of yourselves for the benefit of us all. It may be mistaken—it certainly is honest and disinterested—and flows from a heart warm with the

I have the honour to be,

Fellow Countrymen,

Your faithful Servant, and

Fellow-sufferer,

DANIEL O'CONNELL.

N.B. The Freeman's Journal, from which this letter is taken, does, I think, exonerate Lord Donoughmore and Mr. Plunket from all blame in not presenting the Petition. Indeed, to present it until there be a Reform, would be, according to Mr. O'Connell himself, perfectly useless.

NEXT REGISTER

Will contain the QUEEN'S ANSWER to the pamphlet, entitled, "*A Letter from the king to his people.*"